



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGIST.

VOL. VI.

WASHINGTON, D. C., JULY, 1893.

No. 3.

THE LAST TOWN ELECTION IN POMPEII:

An Archæological Study of Roman Municipal Politics Based on Pompeian Wall Inscriptions.

BY JAMES C. WELLING.

It has now been many years since I traversed the streets of Pompeii and began my study of its wall inscriptions. It chanced that my first visit fell on a day when the laborers engaged in the work of excavation were just laying bare the interior walls of a large mansion in the heart of the town. A French artist stood by my side, with pencil in hand, to transfer to his canvas the fresco (it was a picture of the goddess Flora scattering roses in her train), which had lain buried beneath its ashen shroud for 1,800 years. But as a student of archæology I did not linger long over the wall paintings of a Pompeian interior. Such paintings, at their best estate, belong rather to the category of house decoration than of high art. Hence it is that I have always found myself greatly more interested in the inscriptions traced on the outside of the Pompeian houses than on the formal and conventional work of the journeymen artists who adorned the interiors with frescoes made to order according to the predominant taste of the time.

Since my studies in this direction were first begun a vast addition has been made to the literature of the Pompeian wall inscriptions, in such epigraphical works as those of Orelli, of Garrucci, of Mommsen, and especially of Zangemeister. The collection of the last-named author is almost a complete repository of the materials most essential to the archæological investigator, and such an investigator will be most intelligently guided by a Belgian scholar who has made

this province peculiarly his own, so far as relates to the political significance of the Pompeian wall inscriptions. I refer to a scholarly monograph under this head by M. Willems, a professor in the University of Louvain, who is otherwise known to historical students by his masterly treatise on the "Public Administrative Law of Rome from the origin of the city down to the epoch of Justinian." *

Important archæological "finds" in other parts of what was once the Roman Empire have come besides of late years to throw their cross-light on the electoral methods which were in vogue at the time of Pompeii's overthrow. In the year 1851 two brass tablets were dug up in Spain near the town of Malaga, and on these tablets were found engraved the fragments of a municipal charter granted by the Emperor Domitian to the towns of Salpensa and of Malaca between the years 81 and 84 of the Christian era—a date which makes their enactment almost contemporaneous with the ruin of the Campanian town.† In 1870 and 1874 several tablets containing the organic act granted by Julius Cæsar to the municipality of Urso, now Ossuna, in Spain, were brought to light, and these precious archives have been edited by Berlanga in Spain, by Mommsen in Germany, by Giraud in France, and by others.‡

In the fragments of these several charters the whole theory of Roman municipal government is expounded in detail. From the constitution, for instance, of Malaca we learn how candidates for public place were put in regular nomination; how supplementary candidates could be selected by the presiding judge of elections when a sufficient number of candidates failed to be designated in the regular way by popular initiative; how the elections were conducted; how the ballots were cast and how counted; how the result of elections was to be decided when two or more candidates had an equal number of popular votes in the same *curia* (or ward), or when two or more candidates had carried an equal number of the *curiæ* into which the town was divided for electoral purposes; how the successful aspirants were sworn into office, etc. It may be of interest to state, as illustrating a trait of manners at that time, that where two or more candidates had an equality of votes in Malaca, whether in a single *curia* or in the number of *curiæ* respectively carried by each, the preference was to be given by law to a married man over

* P. Willems : Les Elections Municipales à Pompeii.

† Bruns : Fontes Iuris Romani Antiqui, pp. 136-148.

‡ Bruns : Fontes Iuris Romani Antiqui, pp. 119-136.

a bachelor, to a man who had more children over a man who had comparatively fewer, and, to the end that parentage might lose none of its political privileges, the law further ordained that two deceased children who had lived long enough to be named should be counted as equal to one child still surviving, while sons and daughters who had not deceased till after reaching the age of puberty should be counted on a perfect equality with their surviving brothers and sisters.

The denizen of a town could become *municeps*, a member of the voting population, by free birth, by manumission, by adoption, or by naturalization. The population of a town was divided into Decurions, Augustales, and Plebs, or the populace. The Decurionate of a town comprised its foremost citizens, and, on a small scale, corresponded in relative place and power to the Senate in Rome. This Decurionate was composed of a determinate number of members, generally a hundred, and its members were selected because of their high social positions, their wealth, their public spirit, and especially because of their presumed capacity to bear the public burdens of that day—that is, to dispense largess, furnish gladiatorial games, and adorn the town with public buildings and monuments erected at their expense. It was in no sense a self-perpetuating body. Its members were subject to impeachment for crime or misdemeanor, and if any Decurion was successfully impeached for crime or misdemeanor, the prosecutor who took the brunt of such an accusation was entitled, if otherwise qualified, to step into the shoes of the dignitary whom he had evicted. A public list of Decurions was always kept on exhibition in the *Album* or White List of the town. This list was posted in the Forum, and was revised every five years by the *Duoviri* (or *Quatuorviri*)—that is, by the chosen Selectmen of the town. The duty of Selectmen in a Roman town corresponded to that of burgomasters in an old Dutch town. The Decurionate was kept full by appointments which the Selectmen made from time to time when vacancies were created by death. To be eligible as a Decurion a citizen had to be twenty-five years old and to possess property worth at least 100,000 sesterces.

The Augustales were a corporation appointed originally by Augustus from among the rich freedmen, to occupy a place intermediate between the Decurions and the populace. It was their titular duty to watch over the Lares, whose images the Emperor set up in the cross-roads. The body came in the end to be composed of

rich fools who were willing to pay for costly public sacrifices, sumptuous public entertainments, and large popular assemblies.

The ordinary magistrates of a Roman municipality, at the beginning of the Christian era, were two Selectmen, called *Duoviri juri dicundo* (there were sometimes four of them, called *Quatuorviri juri dicundo*), who presided over the town and administered justice; two Overseers of roads, markets, etc., called *Ædiles*, who superintended the public markets, inspected the weights and measures of tradesmen, kept the roads in repair, and distributed provisions to the needy; and sometimes there was a *Quæstor* who took special charge of the public chest and of the public disbursements, when this duty was not distributed among the *Duoviri* or *Ædiles*.*

City officials were elected every year, generally in the month of March, because the fiscal year was closed on the last of June, and newly elected officers entered on their functions on the first of July. The politics of Rome and her municipalities had not yet reached the stage of the "nominating convention." All candidates were put in nomination by the spontaneous acclamation of their friends. The modest but acquiescent phrase of a modern politician that he "is in the hands of his friends" had its full and literal significance in a Roman town. Anybody—man, woman, or child—could make nominations and post them on any wall space which he or she owned or the use of which he or she was willing to hire for advertising purposes. The nominator wrote out the name of his favorite, the office for which this favorite was designated, and then begged the people to support his recommendation. Sometimes he put his signature to the appeal, and sometimes he blazoned the name of a budding politician at the street corner without putting any sign-manual to the electioneering manifesto. Sometimes the mere initials of a popular name were deemed enough. Municipal statesmen dragged to light in this spontaneous way, though each was doubtless in his own eyes "the rose and expectancy of the fair State," were wary against the risks of candidature when there was no prospect of an election. They waited till they could see how the cat was likely to jump. If their prospect of election seemed good they went to the senior of the Selectmen, who was *ex officio* president of the election, and avowed themselves as candidates for the post in connection with which they had been named. This open avowal of a willing-

* There was no *Quæstor* in Pompeii after the Roman colony displaced the old Oscan natives.

ness to stand was called a *professio*, and from that moment a candidate's name was placed on the town "White List" and exposed to the gaze of all the townsmen in the most frequented part of the Forum.

Elections in Pompeii and elsewhere were not made by a gregarious vote of all the people. Every town was divided into *curiæ*, or electoral precincts, and the successful candidate was he who secured a majority of the precincts, whatever might be his strength or weakness as measured by the total popular vote. Nobody could pose as a candidate till after he had been enrolled on the White List, and every voter was limited in his choice of candidates to the names published in that list.

All the *curiæ* of a town were summoned to an election by a simultaneous call addressed to the voters in each. On election day the voters assembled by *curiæ* in the Forum around the election booth—an enclosure marked off by ropes or by palisades (*tabulata*) or by bars (*cancelli*). The presiding magistrate then read out the names of the candidates to be voted for from the list which had been posted on the public Album three market days before. The voters next received the tablets on which to write the names of the candidates, and at a given signal formed in line, *curia* by *curia*, as each was selected by lot, and, proceeding by a narrow raised walk (made of boards and called the *pons* or *ponticulus*),* they entered man by man into the voting pen, and as they entered dropped their ballot into the ballot-box.† This ballot-box was watched by three public inspectors, called *rogatores*. Besides these public inspectors it was competent for each candidate to station an inspector of his own choosing at the ballot-box to guard against frauds to his disadvantage. All inspectors, as well those of private as those of public appointment, were sworn to keep and return in good faith a correct tally of the votes.

With these preliminaries we are now prepared to understand the political statistics of Pompeii on the occasion of its last municipal election. Pompeii, as everybody knows, was overwhelmed by an

* Hence the origin of the Roman proverb, "Put men of sixty off the bridge" (*Sexagenarios de ponte*), used to signify that any old man might be "lingering superfluous on the stage." At the age of sixty men were exempt from public service.

† For a lively account of election riots at Rome, see Cicero: Epist. ad Atticum, iv, 3. How ballots were "fixed," see Epist. ad Atticum, i, 14.

eruption of Mount Vesuvius on the 23d and 24th of August, in the year A. D. 79. Her two Selectmen and her two Ædiles were therefore elected in the preceding month of March and had entered on their functions on the 1st of July. Within the already excavated part of the town the signs of that last municipal contest meet us on every hand in the shape of political manifestoes painted in red, scrawled in crayon, or cut with the stylus on the surface of a thousand walls. From the large number of these inscriptions already recovered it is plain that nearly two thousand of such proclamations must have been posted in the whole town. Some of these, however, are evidently the vestiges of electoral contests in former years. The great majority of them reveal the Roman electioneering process in the first stage of its manifestation, to wit, in the spontaneous nomination of candidates. The first suggestion of a new candidate was put forward as a "feeler," and, as has been just stated, proceeded from the neighbors, friends, or clients of any putative aspirant. This suggestion was made in the terms of a consecrated formula, and, to cite one example among a thousand, ran as follows: "Phœbus, with his customers, desires M. Holconius Priscus and Caius Gavius Rufus as Duoviri." "Parthope, with Rufinus, desires Helvius Sabinus as Ædile." As a result of the spontaneous nominations made in the year 79 we know that only ten men, out of the hundred or more who received a fillip of some kind, were willing to stand the risks of the electoral ordeal. For the office of Duumvirate four citizens made a public *professio*. We know their names, their residences, and in some cases the quality of their supporters. Their names were Marcus Holconius Priscus, otherwise known to have been one of the most opulent citizens of Pompeii; Lucius Ceius Secundus, Caius Gavius Rufus, residing in the northern part of the town, and Caius Calventius Sittius Magnus. For the office of Ædile six candidates put themselves in evidence: M. Casellius Marcellus, M. Cerrinius Vatia, L. Popidius Secundus, C. Cuspius Pansa, Cn. Helvius Sabinus, and L. Albucius Celsus.

After the names of these candidates had been posted on the municipal bulletin-board—I should say the bulletin wall-space—it will be readily understood that there was a variation in the mode of popular appeal. As voters in their selection of candidates were confined to names on the official list, we observe that all the electioneering appeals after a certain date call for votes in behalf of some particular candidate or candidates. A single example will

suffice to illustrate the changed formula: "We beg you to vote for Caius Gavius Rufus and Lucius Ceius Secundus as Selectmen." "We beg you to vote for M. Casellius Marcellus and L. Albucius Celsus as *Ædiles*.*

Labor leagues, guilds, sodalities, political clubs, and religious associations had been of ancient date in Pompeii. All such voluntary organizations, as we learn from Tacitus,† were suppressed at one time because of the riots to which their rivalries had led, but they soon reëstablished themselves, and their active intervention in this last town election may be read on every wall. Labor leagues were factors in politics, because every league had its patron, selected from among the rich inhabitants of the town, and the patron looked to his league for its organic support at the nominating period and on election days—that is, the leagues were political machines whose working gear was lubricated by the rich man's sesterces. Local and religious unions also took an active part in Pompeian politics.

Among the Labor Leagues which bore a hand in the municipal campaign of A. D. 79 were those of the "Goldsmiths," the "Workers in Wood," the "Wheelwrights," the "Fruiterers," the "Miller-Bakers," the "Pastry Cooks," the "Poulterers," the "Dyers," the "Barbers," the "Muleteers," the "Perfumers," the "Fishmongers," and, of course, the "Tavern-keepers." Among clubs we find the names of the "Ball-jugglers" (*Pilicrepi*), of the "Farmers," of the "Late Topers" (*Seribibi*), of the "Sleepy-heads" (*Dormientes*), and of the "Little Thieves" (*Furunculi*), the last three being facetious names of which the origin is as obscure to us as the origin of our "Hunkers" and "Barn-burners" will probably be to the archæological student of American political nomenclature in the year 4000 of our era. The club of the "Late Topers" had their headquarters at the tavern of one Edone (the Latinized spelling of her name indicates that she was a Greek), situate between No. 10 and No. 11 in the street of the *Augustales*,

*The ordinary formula, written out in full, is "*oro vos faciatis*," or "*oramus vos faciatis*." Sometimes it is abbreviated into "*O. V. F.*," and sometimes into "*OF*." In the nominating stage of these inscriptions the word *cupit* is used interchangeably with *rogat*, and in the voting stage the writer sometimes gives emphasis to his suffrage by declaring that he votes for his favorite "with pleasure," "with eagerness," or with "very great eagerness"—(*gaudens facit, cupidus facit, cupidissimus facit*).

† Tacitus: *Annalium*, Lib. xiv, 17. Cf. Suetonius: *Julius Cæsar*, § 42.

leading to the Forum. An inscription on the outside of the inn announces that the Late Topers, in a body, solicit the suffrages of the people for M. Cerrinius Vatia as *Ædile*. (M. Cerrinius Vatiā *Æd.* O. V. F. Seribibi *Universi rogant. Scr. Florus cum Fructo*). Two doors further on the "Little Thieves" publish their adhesion to Vatia in like manner (Vatiā *Æd.* *Furunculi rog.*), and at the next entrance the "Sleepy-heads" call, as they say, with entire unanimity for the nomination of the same "favorite son" of Pompeii.

It must be confessed in my veracious chronicle of the last town election in Pompeii that the aforesaid M. Cerrinius Vatia had the bad fortune to be supported by all the self-styled Tapsters, Sluggards, and Jeremy Diddlers of the town. As Vatia was also patronized by the men of brawn combined in the Labor Union of the burly "Street Porters," and appears to have been a favorite with the coarse Oscan folk comprised in what was known as the "Campanian ward" of Pompeii, it is to be feared that he must be classified as a "sporting character," as a "stalwart," or even as a "tough." It is very certain, from the quality of his supporters, that his virtues could not have leaned to the side of too much asceticism.

We learn from the wall inscriptions that two of the guilds or socialities which participated in this last town election were formed under the auspices of religion—that is, of such religion as passed current in Pompeii at that date. They were formed respectively by the votaries of Isis and the votaries of the Physical Venus. Isis, the Egyptian goddess, whose worship was suppressed again and again at Rome by consuls and emperors because of the licentious orgies connected with her mysteries, had a temple and a strong following in Pompeii. Indeed, she divided with Venus the religious cult of the town, and we may picture to our fancy the roystering crew of her devotees as, on election day, they marched to the polls with their dog-faced masks on their faces.* The Isis cult united on Cuspius Pansa and Helvius Sabinus for the *Ædileship*. But the Physical Venus—not the Heavenly Venus, be it observed, but the

* Isis was so popular in Pompeii that when her temple had at one time been destroyed by an earthquake, probably by the earthquake of A. D. 63, and when Numerius Popidius Celsinus had caused it to be rebuilt from its foundation at his own expense, the Decurions annexed him to their order at once, though at the time he was only six years old. Orelli, vol. ii, p. 165.

"*Venus fisica Pompeiana*," as she is described on these walls—was the patron goddess of this voluptuous town. Her votaries announced that in this election they would support Ceius Secundus as Duumvir and Popidius Secundus as *Ædile*. In what is to-day called the street of the Soprastanti, not far from the Forum, we may remark on the wall of a shop the following inscription, appropriately placed under a picture of Bacchus: "Venus goes for Casellius as *Ædile*." We see that Bacchus and Venus were married in Pompeian politics as well as in the old mythology of the time. Isis had her party and Venus had her party, but Pudicitia, the goddess of Chastity, appears to have had none. There is certainly no trace on these walls of any "Sodality for the preservation of Chastity" (*Sodalitas Pudicitiae Servandæ*) as we know there once was in Rome.*

The preparation of wall surfaces for the reception of inscriptions, and the writing of political advertisements upon them, was evidently a thriving branch of business in Pompeii. We know the names of the men employed in each of these callings. They were the job printers and bill-posters of the time. Among the wall-surface preparators one Onesimus and one Victor seem to have been conspicuous. Among wall-writers, Issus and Secundus and Fructus and Papilio and Protogenes and Infantio have been careful to hand down their names to us by appending them at the bottom of the political announcements of which they were the paid inscribers. Infantio at one time had evidently made a "corner" in the advertising business, for he writes that he had associated with him in his trade, "here and everywhere," a trio of partners—Florus, Faustus, and Sabinus—the first case on record, so far as I know, of a "trust" in bill-posting! Sometimes a thrifty citizen of Pompeii, whose house was well situated for the purpose, would rent out the whole broadside of his habitation for the reception of public advertisements. A case in point is that of the popular baker, Titus Genialis Infantio (was he a relative of Infantio the bill-poster?), who sold bread and cakes on the southeast corner of a square not far from the middle of the via Nola. His house suffers to this day almost as much from the pock-marks of the political advertiser as from the volcanic peltings of Vesuvius. It is speckled with what Willems calls a veritable motley of electioneering cries. It ought, perhaps, to be mentioned

* Orelli, vol. i, p. 418.

that Mr. Cerrinius Vatia, our candidate with the scurvy following, appears to have employed careful scribes to indite his name where it could be best seen by an admiring public. Popidius Secundus, on the other hand, engaged mere scribblers, who were careless even in their spelling. It is evident that he was not a "liter'ry fellow."

We have said that the *curia* or *tribus* was the electoral unit of a town. The number of these *curiæ* depended on the size of the town and the extent of its voting population. There were probably six wards in Pompeii, and from the electoral announcements we can conjecture the names of at least three of them: the ward of the "Forum," comprising the squares in its vicinity; the ward of the "Campanians," in the northeastern part of the town, where the old Oscan folk had their habitations; and the ward of the "Salt Yards," lying along the suburbs in the direction of Herculaneum. On the wall of a house in Crooked street (Vico Storto, as the Italians to-day call it) we find this inscription, "Hurrah for the Salt Yarders!" (*Saliniensibus feliciter!*) We may fancy that this exultant inscription was put up after the "Salt Yarders" had gloriously carried their ward for their favorite candidates, and had thus saved Pompeii, as they fondly hoped, for at least one year, when Vesuvius came in the twinkling of an eye to put an end to low ambition and the pride even of Duoviri, in this public-spirited municipality where, as Cicero tells us, it was harder to become a Decurion than to become a Senator in Rome.*

As Pompeians voted by electoral precincts and not by a general vote of all the inhabitants, it is easy to see that this arrangement lent itself to "trades" and "combines" between candidates and their adherents in the several wards. The aim of each candidate was to secure a majority of the *curiæ*, however far he might lag behind in the popular vote. Hence the temptation to sell votes where they were not wanted for votes where they could do the most good—to wit, in evenly divided *curiæ*. The evidences of such

* See the story in Macrobius, where, however, the point of the pleasantry is not so much the difficulty of becoming a Decurion in Pompeii as the facility with which one could become a Senator in Rome—by the favor of Julius Cæsar. "Cicero facilitatem Cæsaris in adlegendo Senatu inrisit palam. Nam cum ab hospite suo, C. Mallio, rogaretur ut Decurionatum privigno ejus expediret, adistente frequentia, dixit: 'Romæ, si vis, habebit; Pompeiis difficile est.'" Conviv. Saturnal., Lib. vii.

“trades” and “deals” are abundant.* For instance, on the house wall of Rufinus, a man of good family in Pompeii, but who evidently had a municipal bee buzzing in his bonnet, we read this inscription, put there by some fogleman for L. Popidius Secundus: “Rufinus, we beg you to vote for Popidius Secundus as Ædile. He is an excellent young man and worthy of the commonwealth. Favor him and he will vote for you.” [Popidium Secundum Æd. D. R. P., Probissimum Juvenem, O. V. F., Rufine, fave et ille te faciet.] On another wall we read: “Proculus, vote for Sabinus as Ædile, and he will vote for you.” This Proculus was evidently a political “worker” and had a “machine.” At a previous election we find this appeal to him: “Proculus, put in your full work (*officium commoda*) for your man Fronto.” An order from one of our own municipal “machines” could hardly improve on such a choice bit of practical politics. Sometimes these appeals are of the whining or supplicatory kind, such as that addressed to one Diadumenus at a former election. Somebody has written on his house: “O Diadumenus, I know that you are going to vote for Lucretius as Ædile.” Sometimes a gleam of humor shines through these wall inscriptions, as when Sabinus, who describes himself as “usher” in the town theatre, and who therefore was used to the sound of applauding audiences, declares that he “votes” for M. Popidius Sabinus as Duumvir “with applause” (*cum plausu*).

It is some consolation to find that these “trades” were concerted between the friends of candidates for the Ædileship and not of candidates for the office of Duumvir, which latter had judicial duties attached to it. Willems notes that among all these electioneering appeals there is not one emanating from a Duumvir in office at that time. These dignitaries appear to have abstained from all “pernicious activity” at least in the last town election held in Pompeii; and yet there was no Civil Service Commission in Pompeii to keep them in order. Where there was political cheating we may be sure there was much of crimination and recrimination. The fidelity of clansmen and of “heelers” was often called in doubt. For instance, on the wall of a house situate on the street which leads to Stabia, and which was a popular thoroughfare, some “heeler” of

* Such “trades” or “deals” were so common in Roman cities that in the political vocabulary of the time there was a technical name for the process of making them. It was called, “Coire ad deiciendum alium honore.”

Caius Calventius Sittius, who, we remember, was "running" for the office of Duumvir, has addressed the following significant admonition to a political confederate by the name of Ubonius: "Ubonius, be on your guard!"—"Keep your eye skinned," as we would say in modern parlance. This "heeler," I regret to say, like some of his congeners at the present day, was stronger in the art of voting a straight ticket than in the art of Latin orthography, for his spelling of "vigila" (which he spells "vigula") would have made Quintilian gasp. On another wall we find some political friend of L. Popidius Secundus, whose name has met us before in these unsavory associations, pouring sarcasm on a fellow-worker who was, it seems, not sufficiently wide awake to the then pending "crisis" in Pompeian politics. He writes: "O Infans, you are asleep, and you are electioneering!" Besides these, one Attalus and one Magius are stigmatized on the walls of Pompeii as politicians who deserved the curse of Meroz, and who were "sleeping" on the parapets of the citadel when they should have been alert to foil the knavish tricks of the adversary.

The word "Mugwump" is said to be of Algonquian origin, but eighteen hundred years before our learned colleague, Mr. J. C. Pilling, had published his "Bibliography of Algonquian Languages" it would seem that Pompeii had her Mugwumps, of somewhat easy virtue, who satisfied themselves with making wry faces in public when they swallowed an unsavory candidate. At any rate, we have a wall inscription written by a man who gave only a squeamish support to M. Cerrinius Vatia, the same dubious worthy who rejoiced in the patronage of the "Late Topers," of the "Sleepy Heads," and of the "Little Thieves." The inscription reads as follows: "M. Cerrinius for Ædile. One man has his likes; another man is liked. I am squeamish. The man who is squeamish has his likes."* The language is slightly enigmatical, but the meaning is clear. The writer means to say that though he has what we should call to-day "Mugwumpian proclivities," he yet has a liking for Cerrinius and intends to vote for him without asking too nice questions for conscience sake. Perfectly frank, outspoken, and

* In the compact Latin it is phrased and spaced as follows:

M. Cerrinium,
Æd. Alter amat; alter
Amatur. Ego fastidio.
Qui fastidit, amat.

thorough-going, however, is the political enthusiasm of other partisans, who evidently prided themselves on voting the "regular ticket"—such as that of the henchman who appeared to have supported one Quintus in some former election. He writes: "The man who refuses to vote for Quintus ought to be mounted on an ass."

The tavern and the eating-saloon were a political power in Pompeii. Most of the women who took a hand in Pompeian politics were, I regret to say, members of the "Tavern-keepers' Union" in Pompeii. There was such an Union in Pompeii, as abundantly appears from the electioneering manifestoes. The names of Pollia, of Statia, of Petronia, of Helpis Afra, of Recepta, and others attached to these electoral broadsides, are significant at once of the humble origin and of the disreputable profession of their bearers. Sometimes they are associated with their husbands in this political "tooting," and in at least two cases the gray mare seems to have been the better horse, for the woman puts her name before that of her husband:* "*Recepta, nec sine Thalamo*," is the quiet way in which one of these political landladies tucks away her husband under her apron-string in announcing their joint nominations.

That primary meetings and caucuses were sometimes held in tavern halls we know from this tell-tale inscription on the wall of a hostelry: "Landlord Seius, you did well in accommodating us with seats." It is evident that the caucus had been a little larger than usual on some night during the electoral canvass; that Landlord Seius had risen to the height of a great emergency, and had determined that the meeting of his crapulous political customers should

* It has sometimes been suspected that women voted in Pompeii, because there are two or three wall inscriptions which may seem to have such an implication; but the statement is doubted by Willems on what seems good grounds. In such phrases as "Little Sprite votes for Claudius as Duumvir" (*Claudium iiv. Animula facit*) we may much better suspect a pleasantry than a cold historical fact; just as when we read on another wall that "Venus goes for Casellius as Ædile" we do not take the statement literally. Such pleasantries are common enough in Cicero's Letters, where Marc Antony figures as "the Trojan Lady." And then, if women voted in Pompeii, what are we to do with the express statement of Aulus Gellius, who wrote about this time, when he says that "between women and elections there is no communion"? The passage may be found in the seventh book of his "Attic Nights," and seems to have been strangely overlooked by the critics.

not be broken up for want of sitting accommodations! If the "Loco-Foco match," suddenly improvised on a certain occasion to relight Tammany Hall, was sufficient to give its name for years to a great party in the United States, who shall say that the provident thoughtfulness of Landlord Seius might not well excite the admiration of a Pompeian "heeler"? How far off seems the sound of these ancient tosspots, as they jabber municipal politics over their cups of sour wine, and yet how near it is to us all, as we recall the publications of our own "Municipal Reform Leagues"!

Paullo majora canamus. Let us turn from these surface indications and these minute curiosities of Pompeian politics to the deeper moral of our archæological study. We catch here the institutes of Roman municipal government in the transition epoch. Republican liberty was dead in the city of Rome, but the simulacrum of popular suffrage was allowed to survive for a time in the remoter municipalities. The servile collar was fastened on the neck of the Roman people, but the collar was gilded. The rude *ovilia* into which the tribes had flocked on the Campus Martius were converted into marble colonnades large enough to afford standing room to the whole voting population of Rome. Cicero tells us in one of his letters to Atticus that even in his days they were proposing to erect marble halls a mile long for political gatherings.* The halls were built and dedicated by Augustus, but with the accession of Tiberius the farce of popular elections was ended. All elections were transferred from the Campus Martius to the Senate. Municipal autonomy was abolished. Rome had purchased civil security at the price of political privilege, and was content with her bargain. Most interesting would it be to trace the successive stages of this great social and political transformation, for it was social before it was political, and it is in the later stages of this transformation that the seeds of the European feudal system were sown. The common people were cut and carved by the swords of their masters into artificial working gangs, and were planted on separate parcels of land under an arbitrary tie of allegiance. The unit of government passed from the clan with its tie of common blood to the feud with its tie of common land.

If the land law of England still welters in the dregs of feudalism (*in facie feudorum*), as Sir Henry Sumner Maine declares, it is cer-

* Cicero: Epist. ad Atticum, iv, 16.

tain that the land law of the feud drew its origin from the corruption of the blood-tie, as a bond of government, in the last dregs of Romulus (*in facie Romuli*), as Cicero phrased it. In the redistribution of social elements in this period of change, a separate and distinct stratification of social layers was being slowly effected throughout the whole Roman Empire. The upper classes were differentiated into finical strata based on mere distinctions of rank, the aristocracy of place and function, and no longer the aristocracy of character and service. What with titular rights of precedence among the *Nobilissimi*, the *Illustres*, the *Spectabiles*, the *Clarissimi*, the *Perfectissimi*, and the *Egregii*, the lines of social demarcation were arbitrarily drawn, because they were purely artificial in their institution. The public offices were gradually converted from posts of public trust into the seats of a centralizing despotism, which called for posture-masters of servility rather than for self-respecting rulers. The office of Decurion from being sought because of its honorable insignia and its social privileges came to be loathed and shunned for its intolerable burdens. Rich men hid themselves from publicity, and, like the martyrs they were, they wandered in deserts and in mountains and in dens and caves of the earth to escape the pains and penalties of office. They married slaves to work corruption of blood in order to disqualify themselves for public honors. They enlisted as common soldiers, preferring the horrors of war to the terrors of office. The only door of hope which opened to them a way of escape from this valley of Achor was to be the father of twelve children. The law of the Empire graciously assumed that the father of twelve children had done service enough to the State without being called to make further contributions, and that he was likely to have cumber enough at home without bending his back to bear the burdens of the commonwealth. And as every benedict could not hope that his wife would prove such a fruitful vine by the sides of his house as to be the mother of twelve children, rich men at length sullenly forswore matrimony on the plea that they were tired of gendering servants who should be at the behests of an insatiate and blood-thirsty populace, which never wearied in its cry for bread and gladiatorial games.*

In like manner the Labor Unions, from being self-protecting leagues which aimed to stimulate a wholesome emulation among

* Corpus Iuris Civilis : Novella xxxviii.

their membership, were ultimately converted into so many bands of hereditary bondsmen, tied to the trades in which they were born as serfs were tied to the soil on which they were born. The unions themselves were crushed under the iron wheel of imperial law.* It became a rule of law that a labor union could claim its run-away members as the curials of a town could claim their run-away officials. Theodosius launched his thunderbolt at the members of labor leagues who deserted handicraft service in the cities and betook themselves into the waste places of the earth. He proclaimed that all such shirks should be recovered from the solitudes into which they had fled, and should be bound afresh to the thralldom of their taskmasters. There was no exit from the *status* of the laborer. The laboring masses were reduced to a common level of degradation, with no vicissitude except that determined by distinction of labor castes. The feudal system was in full process of formation.

We see how true it is that the loss of freedom and of individual initiative brings with it the loss of all other boons. "Sow liberty in a lagoon," says Serrigny, "as at Venice, in her origin; in a fen, as in Holland; in a little island, as in England, and there will spring from it a nation great and glorious. . . . Give to despots the whole earth, as the empire of Rome, the capital city of the world, was given to the Cæsars (or, rather, as it was snatched by them), and they will raise great armies, will build magnificent structures and monuments, will create grand and beautiful highways, will organize an administration regular, uniform, and highly centralized, the instrument of domination; will achieve, if needs be, the conquest of the world. All this will produce for the inhabitants of that nation only ruin, misery, confiscation, desolation, and from all this there will emanate in the end only a putrid corpse, ready to be trampled under foot by barbarians." †

* Digest: xlviii, 22.

† Serrigny: *Droit Public et Administratif Romain*. Vol. ii, p. 448.